MY OTTAWA DAYS

chapter

1938 to 1957

Years 1938 to 1940

I remember of course very little of the first few years. I was born 4 February 1938 in the Ottawa Civic. My parents lived in two or three apartments before moving to 156 First Avenue.

First Avenue is the home (another apartment) I remember growing up in. We lived on the first floor. The area, the Glebe, was strictly Anglo Saxon. The McCanns, the Drivers, the Holts, the Laughtons - not a French-Canadian, Italian, or other nationality but Great Britain. On the 24th of May, Queen Victorias birthday - that day was firecracker day. July the First was not even heard of - an American holiday. The red ensign and union jack flags were both flying out on the 25 th of May. We sang God Save the King (King George VI) at school. The school

My father joined the Air Force in 1940 and was shipped overseas after a few months. On Sunday families would parade up and down Bank Street with the menfolk in their new Army or Air Force uniforms & very few Navy. Everyone was saluting everyone & it was great fun. This was before rationing & the realities of war set in.

I remember going over to Aunt Evelyn & Uncle Eddie Hough's house on McKay Street in New Edinburg the day before my father went overseas. He wanted to say goodbye to his sister Evelyn though & at the time of writing this there are some pictures of this day in the photo album.

I was not to see my father again until 1946 with a brief visit in 1945 when he came back briefly after the war. He then went back with the United Nations Refugee Mission. Hence I never really

I went to First Avenue Public School in Ottawa from Kindergarten to Grade 6.

The floors were of wood & creaky. The Grade 6s were given the responsibility one by one for ringing the bell and the principal still gave the strap on the hand for bad behavior.

The Janitor, Mr Skipworth, knew every kid in the school. Mr Skipworth was there 7 days a week to keep the furnace going. On the weekends he would sit in the principals office drink his rum, and tell us local kids stories of the days of old Ottawa. How he had worked in lumber camps & on log booms.

How they built houses on the log booms and cooked there meals, mostly beans, on a fire built on sand piled on the log boom. In the 1980s one could still build sand cooked beans in Hull - a throw back to to log boom days.

Mr Skipworth was a World War I vetran and